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ABSTRACT

In winter 1988, surveys were conducted at nine Washington community colleges to develop a profile of students in terms of employment status, educational objectives, family background, and prior educational attainment. Questionnaires were administered to 4,669 Washington community college students enrolled in state-supported academic and vocational courses. Study findings, extrapolated to the 121,100 students currently enrolled in such courses at Washington's 27 community colleges, indicate the following: (1) about 46,000 "place-bound" adults (i.e., those with full-time family or job responsibilities in addition to their college course work) enroll in academic and vocational courses each quarter, making up 35% to 41% of the total state enrollment; (2) most community college students are employed, with nearly one-third working full time; (3) most community college students say their courses provide them with skills related to their current or future work, and nearly 80% see a direct relationship between their coursework and their jobs; (4) 62% to 68% of the students pay the entire cost of their education without the benefit of financial aid, loans, or scholarships; (5) of the nearly 20,000 students who enroll without a high school diploma or equivalent, half are enrolled in Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language and half in academic and vocational classes; and (6) about 48,500 students enroll each fall quarter to prepare for transfer to four-year institutions. The survey report includes profiles of seven student types: students with family incomes below the poverty level, transfer students, re-entry homemakers, single parents, students not completing high school before college, unemployed students, and life-long learners. The survey instrument is appended. (MDB)

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WASHINGTON COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CURRENT STUDENT SURVEY, WINTER 1988

Summary of Survey of Students in

State-supported Vocational and Academic Courses

at Nine Representative Colleges

(Adult Basic Education [ABE] and English as a Second Language [ESL] Students Excluded)

April 1988

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CURRENT STUDENT SURVEY, WINTER 1988

HIGHLIGHTS

The results of a survey of 4,669 Washington community college students enrolled in state-supported academic and vocational courses in Winter 1988 show:

* About 46,000 "place-bound" adults enroll in academic and vocational courses each quarter, 35% to 41% of the enrollment.
* Most community college students are working students. Nearly 1 in 3 work full-time.
* Most community college students say their courses provide them skills related to their current or future work. Nearly 4 out 5 saw a direct relationship between courses and their job.
* The majority of students (62% to 68%) pay the entire cost of their education without the benefit of financial aid, loans or scholarships.
* Among the special needs populations served by the community colleges, the following groups comprise an important part of the enrollment in academic and vocational courses:

Special Needs Population	Percent of the Academic and Vocational Enrollment
Low-Income Students	19% to 23%
Single Parents	8% to 12%
Re-entry Homemakers	6% to 10%
Unemployed	3% to 5%

Students enrolled in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) were excluded in the survey. The percentage of students in special needs population do not include these students.

* About 20,000 students enroll in community colleges without a high school diploma or GED. Half are enrolled in ABE and ESL, and the rest are in academic and vocational classes, including high school completion courses.
* About 48,500 students enroll in community colleges each fall quarter to prepare to transfer to four-year institutions.
* Factors cited most often as influences to attend their college were: having courses at a convenient location (61%) and having courses offered close to home or work (50%).

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Bellevue Community College

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Grays Harbor College

North Seattle Community College

Seattle Central Community College

Skagit Valley Community College

South Puget Sound Community College

Wenatchee Valley Community College

Yakima Valley Community College

CURRENT STUDENT SURVEY, WINTER 1988

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CURRENT STUDENT SURVEY, WINTER 1988

INTRODUCTION

Survey Goal

During the third, fourth and fifth weeks of winter quarter, 1988, nine community colleges administered the Current Student Survey to 4,669 students. The colleges were: Grays Harbor (Aberdeen), Skagit Valley, Seattle Central, North Seattle, Bellevue, South Puget Sound, Clark (Vancouver), Wenatchee Valley, and Yakima Valley.

The objective of the survey was to describe students in the community college system creating a profile of their work status, educational objective, family background, and prior educational attainment.

Survey Assumptions

1. Exclusion of ABE and ESL Students

Students in state-supported academic and vocational courses were included in the survey sample. Excluded from the survey sample, because of their limited ability to complete a written survey, were students enrolled exclusively in English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) and Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses. The excluded ABE students were enrolled in courses designed for people with reading or math levels below the ninth grade level and those in courses for GED preparation. Those excluded represent 9 percent of the students in state-supported courses and 8 percent of the state-supported FTEs.

The study did include those students enrolled in math, reading or writing classes just below the college level or in high school completion courses.

2. Extrapolation of Results to Community College System Enrollment

The survey results can be extrapolated to the 121,100 students currently enrolled in state-supported academic and vocational courses in Washington's 27 community colleges. Those students represent about 76,600 annual FTEs (out of 83,000 total). When the sample was compared to this total population in terms of the age, race, and sex, it was found to be representative of the total population. For further information on the sample compared to the population see Appendix B.

Results

This report consists of two sections:

* Conclusions about the service provided by community colleges
* Profiles of seven selected student types

The Appendix includes:

A. Summary of responses to the main survey questions
B. Discussion of the survey method and the statistical analysis
C. Survey instrument

SECTION I. CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE SERVICE PROVIDED BY COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Community college advocates have stressed the special role of community colleges in providing accessible, low-cost education which is responsive to unique community needs. Proponents have also affirmed that the community colleges provide an open-door to educational opportunities for individuals who may have found only barriers in the past. The results of this survey of academic and vocational students enrolled in winter quarter of 1988 confirms that Washington community colleges are performing these special functions.

Specifically, the survey results demonstrate:

* A high level of service is provided to place-bound adults (about 46,000 students, 35% to 41% of students in academic and vocational courses).
* A high proportion of students are working while enrolled (about 94,500 are in the workforce, 76% to 80%; about 36,000 are working full-time, 27% to 33%).
* About 4 out of 5 students see their enrollment related to their current or future work.
* Students perceive the cost of community college education to be affordable.
* The following special needs populations are being served in academic and vocational courses:
  - Low-income people (about 25,000 students, 19% to 23% from families below the poverty level)
  - Single parents (about 12,000 students, 8% to 12%)
  - Re-entry homemakers (about 10,000 students, 6% to 10%)
  - Unemployed (about 5,000 students, 3% to 5%)
  - Adults without high school diploma or GED (about 10,000 students, 6% to 10%)
* Colleges continue to be responsive to local needs.

Conclusion 1: Service to Place-bound Adults:

* Community colleges serve about 46,000 "place-bound" students in academic and vocational courses; 35% to 41%.
* Three in four "place-bound" students are working full-time outside the home.
* "Place-bound" students are slightly more likely to enroll for job-related reasons than for transfer.
* "Place-bound" students are planning to complete fewer credits at their college than other potentially more mobile students.

"Place-bound adults" are defined as those with full-time family or work responsibilities in addition to their college course-work. Washington community colleges enroll a high proportion of such students, 36 to 40 percent of the enrollment in academic and vocational courses. Each quarter, about 46,000 students are working or homemaking full-time.

When asked what influenced them to attend college, the factors cited most often by survey respondents were: having courses at a convenient location (61 percent) and having courses offered close to home or work (50 percent). These responses indicate that community colleges are meeting the needs of those seeking their education close to work or home.

Place-bound adult students are more likely to have job-related rather than transfer-related reasons for enrolling in community colleges. Nevertheless, nearly one in three plan to transfer.

Why enrolled? (main reasons)	Place-bound	All Others
Prepare for Transfer to a Four-Year College	27-33%	44-48%
Job-Related	41-47%	20-26%
"Learn a Specific Course of Study"	15-21%	15-17%

(Note: Percentages are presented in ranges to reflect the potential error when extrapolating from the sample.)

By definition, "place-bound adults" are involved full-time in an activity other than college enrollment. Thus it is not surprising that on the average they do not plan to accumulate the same number of credits that other students aspire to accumulate.

Credits Planned	Place-bound	All Others
90 or more	38-44%	51-55%
60-89 credits	11-17%	13-15%
40-59 credits	9-15%	10-12%
20-39 credits	10-16%	7-8%
19 or less	18-24%	14-18%

Conclusion 2: High Proportion of Students Also Work:

* About 94,500 students in academic and vocational courses are in the workforce, 76% to 80% of enrollment in academic and vocational classes.
* About 36,000 students work full-time outside the home, 27% to 33% of enrollment in academic and vocational classes.
* About 10,500 full-time workers also enroll full-time (10 credits or more in college), 28% to 30% of all students working full-time.
* About 50,000 students work part-time, 38% to 44% of students in academic and vocational courses.
* About 35,000 part-time workers enroll full-time, 67% to 73% of all students working part-time.

Most community college students are working students. Nearly one in three works full-time (including military service). And of those working full-time, nearly one in three enrolls full-time at their college. Of the 38 to 44 percent working part-time (50,000) only about 5,000 are part of the work-study programs. The rest have jobs that are not a subsidized part of financial aid.

About 10,000 students are not working while they start their course work for the quarter, but they are seeking full or part-time employment while they are students. These unemployed people who are looking for work are also considered part of the workforce.

Conclusion 3: Students See Relationship Between Enrollment and Work

Both students who are already working and those who are preparing for their first job see their courses as related to their current or future work. Only 12 percent of the survey respondents indicated their courses did not apply to their job or future work plans.

> The most commonly cited ways that courses related to work were that courses helped students prepare for a career change or get a better job (40 percent), provided skills to get a job (23 percent), and provided skills to enhance or keep up-to-date in a current job (14 percent). Appendix A, page 13, provides detail on the responses to this question.

Conclusion 4: Students Perceive Cost to be Affordable

* Having costs within the student's ability to pay is a reason for selecting a community college for nearly half the respondents.
* About 79,000 students, finding costs affordable, enroll without the aid of financial aid, 62% to 68% of students in academic and vocational courses.

Community college tuition is $253.00 per quarter for full-time students or $25.30 per credit for part-time students. Tuition covers 23 percent of the actual cost of instruction at community colleges. The remaining cost in state-supported courses is funded by the legislature.

> With most community college students enrolling part-time (about 53 percent enroll part-time, taking an average of four credits each), it was not surprising to learn from the survey results that the majority of students (62 to 68 percent) pay the entire cost of their community college education without the benefit of financial aid, scholarships or student loans. They pay for tuition, fees, books, supplies, day care and transportation costs from their own earnings or with the aid of parents or employers.

Even some very low income students enroll without the benefit of financial aid. About 39 percent of degree-oriented survey respondents reporting family incomes at or below the poverty level ($11,700 for a family of four) enrolled without financial aid. It is estimated that about 5,600 students fall in the category of being both low-income and enrolling without financial aid. The low cost of tuition was essential for them to be able to attend. (Some 46 percent of the respondents said that the "affordable" cost of community college education was one of the reasons they choose to attend).

Conclusion 5: Community Colleges Serve Special Needs Populations

Information collected at registration provides data about Washington community colleges service to several special populations: the handicapped, those who do not read or write, and speakers of English as a second language. The survey results substantiate the high level of service to other special need groups:

* **Adults Without a High School Diploma or GED:** A high school diploma is not required for entrance into a Washington community college. In addition to the non-high school completers who enroll in ABE and ESL classes, about 10,000 students, 6% to 10% of the students in academic and vocational courses, enroll without having completed the high school diploma. Many take courses specially designed for adults seeking to complete the high school program.

* **Low-Income People:** About 25,000 students, 19% to 23% of students in academic and vocational courses, are from families below the poverty level. Best estimates for the state are that 500,000 adults, 14.8%, are economically disadvantaged.

* **Single Parents:** Community colleges serve about 12,000 single parent students, 8% to 12% of the enrollment in academic and vocational classes. The 1980 Census showed that 182,731 families in Washington were headed by single parents, 17% of all families.

* **Re-entry Homemakers:** About 10,000 students, 6% to 10% of those enrolled in academic and vocational classes, are re-entry homemakers. This group has a high rate of interest in job-related education.

* **Unemployed:** Community colleges serve about 5,000 students in academic and vocational courses whose work-status prior to enrollment was that they were unemployed and actively seeking employment. These students comprise 3% to 5% of the academic and vocational enrollment.

More information on each special needs group is contained in the profiles section.

Conclusion 6: Colleges Meet Unique Community Needs:

* **Variations between colleges in student characteristics reflect community variations.**

The survey results reinforce the assumption that local college enrollments are a reflection of local community needs. The nine colleges represented the diversity of Washington: rural areas, suburban areas, core urban areas, fast growing areas, areas with stable populations, Eastern and Western Washington, racially diverse, and predominantly white areas.

The percent of students who are single parents or homemakers varies little from college to college as their proportion in the population is similar across the state. The colleges are not alike in their service levels when the populations they serve differ.

The survey reinforces the assumption that the presence of a four-year institution in a community influences post-secondary aspirations. Colleges in counties which do not have four-year institutions had fewer respondents with an interest in attaining the baccalaureate degree than did other colleges. Clark College, in Vancouver, had a high proportion of respondents interested in the baccalaureate even though it has only an extension center for a four-year institution rather than a four-year college campus. Clark students can continue their work at in-state tuition rates at Portland State University under a reciprocal tuition agreement.

Another example of the student variations reflecting the community was that more respondents were in the $30,000 and over family income level at Bellevue Community College, which serves a more affluent suburban area, than was typical of the other colleges. More respondents also enrolled there without the benefit of financial aid.

SECTION II: STUDENT PROFILES

No model of a "typical" community college student exists. Community college students represent a diversity of student types -- from the re-entry homemaker to the traditional-aged student preparing for a future career. The Current Student Survey was designed to provide information about the characteristics of seven student types of special interest to the community colleges:

1. **Students With Family Incomes Below the Poverty Level**
2. **Transfer Students**
3. **Re-entry Homemaker**
4. **Single Parents**
5. **Students Not Completing High School Before College**
6. **Unemployed**
7. **Life-long Learners**

The seven profiles do not represent every type of student at the community college, but they provide information not previously available regarding the students served by the community colleges. The profiles are not mutually exclusive. A student could be categorized as having more than one profile.

1. Students With Family Incomes Below the Poverty Level

* **About 25,000 students are from families with incomes below the poverty level, 19% to 23% of students in academic and vocational courses.**
* More affluent communities have poverty enrollments of about 14%.
* Less affluent communities have poverty enrollments of about 30%.
* Poverty students are more likely to be enrolled for 12 or more credits and receiving the full-time financial aid benefits.
* Poverty students are more likely to be on work study.

All colleges probably serve a higher percentage of students living at or below the poverty level than is indicated by this survey, because it is likely that many students in ABE and ESL classes are from families at or below the poverty level. Even without counting the additional ABE and ESL students in poverty, representation of this group in the community colleges is higher than in the state at-large.

For 1988, the Washington Employment Security Department has estimated that more than 500,000 adults, 16 and over, are economically disadvantaged (14.8% of the population).

Both family income and size of family are used to calculate poverty status. Those respondents whose reported family income and size fell into the boxes in the following table with the "X" qualified as at or below the poverty level. These poverty cut-offs closely match the federal definition of poverty.

Family Income per year	Family Size 1	2	3	4-5	6 or more
$4,999 or less	X	X	X	X	X
$5-$10,000			X	X	X
$10-$15,000				X	X
$15-$20,000					X

For more information on the survey respondents income level and family size, see Appendix A.

Included as poverty respondents are young people from low-income families as well as heads of low-income families. Also included are independent students who take part-time jobs or quit work while their main activity is college. The latter may make the choice to be low-income for the benefit of having the time to attend college.

Other survey data showed that one-third of all poverty students live alone, compared to one in five for all other students. One in five are in single parent families, compared to 5 to 9 percent of all students. Only 11 to 15 percent of poverty students are likely to be working full-time while enrolled as a college student, compared to one-third of all other students.

About 57 to 63 percent of the poverty students look forward to achieving 90 credits at their community college compared to 42 to 48 percent of all others.

There is little difference between poverty students and others related to long term educational objective, age, sex, or the likelihood of having completed high school prior to enrolling in college.

2. Transfer Students:

* **About 48,500 students, 37% to 43% of the academic and vocational enrollment, enroll to prepare to transfer.**
* About 14,500 of the transfer students are enrolled part-time and thus may require four or more years to complete the community college courses appropriate for transfer.
* About 14,500 transfer students are "place-bound adults" who may find moving to a four-year institution difficult.
* About 12,000 transfer students are working full-time while enrolled.

Transfer students are respondents who selected "prepare for transfer to a four-year college" as their reason for enrolling or respondents who did not make that selection but indicated a plan to attain a four-year degree in the next five years.

Transfer students are more likely to be enrolled full-time than other students, but they are similar to other students regarding the characteristics of sex, age, and work status.

Colleges in counties without four-year institutions had fewer respondents seeking transfer (about 35 percent) than did counties with four-year institutions (up to 51 percent transfer-oriented). The college serving the urban core area of Seattle also had fewer of respondents seeking transfer. When those who already had a four-year degree were excluded from the sample, the percent of respondents seeking transfer increased by three.

3. Re-entry Homemaker

* About 10,000 students are re-entry homemakers, 6% to 10% of the students enrolled in academic and vocational courses.
* 1 in 4 of the re-entry homemaker students are single parents (6% to 10% of other students are single parents).
* 1 in 3 of the re-entry homemaker students are from families below the poverty level (1 in 5 for all other students).
* Re-entry homemaker students have more job-related interest in college than other students.

Re-entry homemakers were defined as respondents 25 years of age or older whose primary activity prior to college was being a full-time homemaker. While most of the respondents categorized as re-entry homemakers were women (97 percent), some men responded in a way that classified them as re-entry homemakers as well. For further information on the primary activity prior to enrolling for other students see Appendix A.

As many re-entry homemakers enroll in order to prepare for their first job outside the home as enroll to prepare for transfer. The job orientation of these students is not surprising given that re-entry homemakers are likely to have had less previous job experience than other students and that the group includes a larger number from lower income families. Other students are four times as likely to enroll to prepare for transfer as they are to enroll to get a first job.

Re-entry homemakers tend to be like all other students regarding their credit loads and their future educational plans.

4. Single Parents:

* About 12,000 students are single parents, 8% to 12% of students in academic and vocational courses.
* Half the single parent students are in families with incomes below the poverty level.

Single parents are respondents who indicated a family status of "single parent with dependent children" and whose family size was two or more. Most single parents are women, 78 to 80 percent. The most common family sizes as shown below were two or three:

Family Size	% of Single Parent Families
2 member	33-41%
3 member	33-41%
4-5 member	17-25%
6 or more members	3-7%

The number of families headed by single parents in Washington in 1980 was 182,731 or 17 percent of all families.

Not all single parents have low income; 5 to 13 percent of single parent respondents were in families with incomes of $30,000 or more. But half the single parents were in families with incomes below the poverty level compared to one in five for other students.

With respect to other students, single parents are similar with regard to their part-time versus full-time enrollment status, the relationship of their courses to current or future work, educational background, future goals, and race/ethnic background.

5. Students Not Completing High School Before College

* Assuming that most ABE and ESL students have not completed high school, **an estimated 20,000 students, 13% to 17% of all state-supported students, have not completed high school prior to enrolling in community colleges.** (About 10,000 students enrolled in academic and vocational courses, 6% to 10%, have not completed high school. An estimated 10,000 of the 11,700 ABE and ESL students are assumed not to be high school completers.)
* Enrollment of non-high school completers in academic and vocational courses is highest at Seattle Central, 26% to 30% of students in those courses, compared to 2% and 4% of students in academic and vocational courses at other colleges.

The enrollment of an estimated 13 to 17 percent of all community college students who have not completed high school is less than the 1980 census figure of 27 percent of all adults over 25 who have not completed high school.

Students who have not completed high school tend to have lower educational goals than other students. Only about one in five plan to get a four-year degree, less than half the rate for other students. The majority plan to complete fewer than 20 credits at their community college. For more information on the credits and degrees planned for all respondents see Appendix A.

The non-high school completers tend to be younger than other students. Three out of five are under 25 years of age compared to half of all other students. They are half as likely as other students to have been working full-time and more likely to have been in the military prior to enrollment.

A college serving a core urban area--Seattle Central--has a considerably higher percent of students who have not completed high school (26 to 30 percent) than other colleges (2 to 4 percent). While Seattle Central is unique in Washington state, the high proportion of non-high school completers matches the patterns observed nationally for inner-city community colleges. (See Donovan and Schaier-Peleg in Change, January/February 1988 and Richardson and Bender, Students in the Urban Settings: Achieving the Baccalaureate Degree, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports, 1985.)

6. Unemployed

* **About 5,000 students, 3% to 5% of students in academic and vocational courses are unemployed before they start college.**
* 1 in 3 unemployed students are from families in poverty.
* Unemployed students have, on an average, shorter term educational objectives than others.

Respondents who said that their status prior to enrolling was "not employed, but seeking employment" were categorized as unemployed students. In addition to the 3 to 5 percent unemployed identified by the survey, the community colleges also serve unemployed students enrolled in the ABE and ESL courses. While the exact proportion of unemployed among the ABE and ESL students must wait to be determined in another study, it can be assumed that when that rate is added to the 3 to 5 percent, the service level will be close to the state unemployment rate. The January 1988 Washington unemployment rate was 8.3 percent (the lowest rate, when seasonally adjusted, since 1980).

The educational plans of unemployed students are shorter-term than those of other students. About 34 to 40 percent plan to take less than 20 credits at their college. Among other students, only 14 to 20 percent plan to take less than 20 credits.

Unemployed students are similar to all other students in regard to their current credit load, age, race and family size.

7. Life-long Learners

* About 12,000 students, 7% to 13% of the students in state-supported academic and vocational courses, are life-long learners.
* About 8,500 life-long learners are working full-time or retired.
* About 7,000 life-long learners are enrolled for just 3 credits or less and 90% to 96% are part-time students.

Life-long learners are respondents who said they did not plan to get a high school diploma or a degree of any kind in the next five years. These are students who have completed their formal education, many at the college degree level, and enroll in college as a part of their life-long need to continue to learn. One-fourth of all life-long learners plan to complete five credits or fewer while at their college.

Four out of five life-long learners are over 25 years of age, compared to half of all other students. Life-long learners are likely to be from families with higher incomes than other students. This may simply be a product of being an older group rather than being a group with more earning potential.

The most common reason life-long learners have for enrolling is to gain help with their job (33 to 39 percent). One-fourth are enrolled to "learn a specific course of study." The majority of life-long learners are employed full-time outside the home, more than twice the rate for all other students. And very few of this group are employed part-time.

Summary

The Current Student Survey did provide information of the characteristics of seven student types that had not previously been described by the information available about community college students. Based on the survey, the proportion of students has been identified who are low-income, transfer students, re-entry homemakers, single parents, non-high school completers, the unemployed and life-long learners.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO MAIN QUESTIONS

Appendix A summaries the responses to each of the main questions on the Current Student Survey. Readers are urged to keep in mind the inherent potential sampling error when these responses are extended from the sample of respondents to the entire enrollment of academic and vocational students in Washington community colleges. Students in ABE and ESL courses were not included in the survey. The responses cannot be extended to include ABE and ESL students.

For a given response question, the tables in this section include an average percentage of those who selected that response. The percentage for the high and low college is reported when the variations among the nine colleges were more than 10 percent and when that variation followed a statistically normal distribution; that is, there were as many colleges with respondents above the average as below.

Why are Students Enrolled?

Respondents were asked why they were currently enrolled at their college. The single most common response was that students were enrolled to prepare to transfer to a four-year institution (40 percent).

Reason	Average %	Range
Prepare for Transfer to Four-Year College	40%	31% to 55%
Job-Related	33%	
"Learn Specific Course of Study"	17%	10% to 25%
Other	8%	
Improve English, Reading, Math	1%	
Earn a High School Diploma or GED	1%	
Not Sure	1%	

Note: Survey did not include 9% of students in ABE/ESL classes

Educational Plans:

A. Number of Credits

Half the respondents said they planned to stay long enough to accumulate 90 credits or more. A college serving the core urban area of Seattle--Seattle Central--had more students with lower expectations of credits to be earned than at other colleges. Only 1 in 3 students planned to get 90 credits. The lower expectation was primarily among students who had not completed high school, a large group at Seattle Central.

Credits Planned at This College	Average %	Range
Less than 5	4%	1% to 11%
5 - 9	6%	
10 - 19	8%	
20 - 39	9%	
40 - 59	11%	
60 - 89	14%	
90+	49%	32% to 62%

B. Degree Planned

The majority of respondents (59 percent) planned to get an Associate's degree at the community college they were attending. Past experience in the Washington community colleges and nation-wide data indicates that many of these students will complete the 90 or more credits in a transfer, without getting the degree, and then transfer.

Last year (1986-87) 10,962 Washington community college students attained the Associate's degree. A study during the same time period at colleges in the Puget Sound region revealed that half that number completed 90 or more credits, but did not get the degree. A study tracking students from 1972 to the present, the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Graduating Class of 1972 (NLS), indicated that 20 percent of community college students attain an Associate's degree within 12 years of leaving high school. So, although 59 percent of the students are not likely to get an Associate's degree, a large proportion of the students will achieve educational goals similar to those signified by the degree.

At least 41 percent of the respondents said they planned to get a Bachelor's degree in the next five years. When those who had already attained degrees were excluded, the proportion seeking degrees in the future was even higher (44 percent). The community colleges and the Higher Education Coordinating Board are currently conducting a study, due for reporting in fall 1988, which will determine the degree to which community college students have access to and participate in baccalaureate education.

Seattle Central and Grays Harbor, the latter at a considerable distance from the nearest four-year institution and with limited job opportunities, had the lowest level of respondents seeking a future degree. Seattle Central's pattern mirrors that of urban community colleges nation-wide where Black and Hispanic students have not been transferring to four-year colleges and universities in substantial numbers. (See Donovan and Schaier-Peleg in **Change**, January/February 1988.) Seattle Central encourages students to pursue higher educational goals than they originally planned.

The highest rate of interest in getting a Bachelor's degree was at Bellevue Community College, a suburban college serving a relatively more affluent population.

Degrees Planned	Average %	Range
Associate Degree at this College	59%	41% to 77%
Bachelor's Degree in Five Years	41%	22% to 53%
Bachelor's Degree seekers as as a percent of those with less than Bachelor's education.	44%	24% to 57%

C. Job Relevance

Respondents were asked if their enrollment related to their current job or future work plans. About 88 percent reported a relationship between their course work and their current job or future job plans.

Courses Related to Jobs	Average %	Range
Get a Job	23%	
Get Better Job	19%	12% to 24%
Career Change	21%	13% to 28%
Enhance Job	11%	6% to 19%
Keep Up-To-Date	3%	
Basic Skills	2%	
Other	9%	
Not Job Related	12%	

The data are consistent with a nation-wide trend in which students see their college enrollment as a means to financial well-being rather than as a place to develop a philosophy of life or to explore knowledge for its own sake. According to the 1987 national survey of freshman, including community college students, conducted as part of the American Council of Educations Cooperative Institutional Research Program, 75.6 percent of the freshman said that "being well off financially" was an essential or very important goal.

Status Prior to Enrollment:

A. Status Immediately Before Enrollment

Respondents were asked to indicate what they had been doing with most of their time immediately before enrolling at their college for the first time. The responses indicate an over-representation from students straight from high school. The 22 percent, with high school as their main activity prior to college, is 5 to 10 percent higher than could be predicted based on the age of enrolled students.

The responses indicate that the most common activity prior to first enrollment is work in the home or outside (59 percent including military service). One of the colleges, North Seattle, had a majority of students indicate their prior main activity was full-time employment. That college describes itself as having a high rate of service to full-time workers.

Main Activity	Average %	Range
Full-time Work	39%	35% to 54%
High School	22%	13% to 30%
Homemaker	9%	
Attending College	8%	
Part-time Work	7%	
Military	4%	
Unemployed, Seeking Work	4%	
Unemployed, Not Seeking (includes Retired)	2%	
Other	4%	

B. Level Education Prior to Enrollment

When asked the level of education prior to enrollment this quarter, most respondents (79 percent) indicated some post-secondary experience. Those with post-secondary experience include students who were enrolled in the college in a prior quarter. About 16 percent of respondents had already completed the Associate's degree or higher.

Education Prior to Quarter	Average %	Range
MA or Other Post-Bachelor's	3%	
Bachelor's	7%	
Associate's	6%	
Certificate	7%	
Some Post-Secondary, No Degree	56%	38% to 76%
High School Only	15%	
Less than High School	7%	1% to 28%

About 10 percent of the respondents had already completed a Bachelor's degree or higher. When that number is extrapolated to all community college students in state-supported courses, including those in ABE and ESL (none of whom are likely to have completed a four-year degree), it is estimated that between 7 and 9 percent have completed a four-year degree or more. Nation-wide, 7.8 percent of community college students have a Bachelor's degree or higher, according to the Center for Study of Community Colleges at the University of Los Angeles. The National Longitudinal Study of 1972 high school graduates found that just 2 percent of those who later attended a community college had a Bachelor's degree or higher when they took community college courses.

Status While A Student:

A. Income Level

Respondents were nearly evenly distributed among the annual family income levels up to $29,000. Some 35 percent indicated they were from a family with an annual income of $30,000 or more. Income levels varied between the colleges in a manner consistent with the populations they served. The family income levels of ABE and ESL students may not be consistent with the pattern found for the respondents who were students enrolled only in academic and vocational courses.

Family Income	Average %	Range
$4,999/Year or Less	14%	
$5,000 to $9,999	12%	
$10,000 to $14,999	11%	
$15,000 to $19,999	11%	
$20,000 to $29,000	17%	
$30,000 or more	35%	25% to 53%

B. Family Status

Respondents at the two urban community colleges were less likely than respondents at other colleges to be living in a family, with

one-third or more saying their family size was "just myself" at those two colleges. Only one in five gave that response at the other colleges.

Family Size	Average %	Range
Self only	24%	20% to 46%
Two	19%	
Three	17%	
Four	21%	11% to 27%
Five	10%	
Six or More	9%	

C. Employment

The majority of respondents (78 percent) indicated that they were members of the workforce (working full or part-time, seeking work or in the military) while they were students.

Status	Average %	Range
Full-time Work	28%	21% to 42%
Part-time Work	35%	24% to 46%
Work-Study	6%	
Unemployed, Seeking Work	8%	
Military	2%	
Homemaker	9%	
Unemployed, Not Seeking	10%	
Other	4%	

Among the full-time workers, 29 percent were full-time students (ten credits or more). The part-time workers were 70 percent full-time students.

D. Employment Status Changes

Some respondents changed their work status because of their enrollment or enrolled because of a change in their work status, as reflected in the comparison of the number in each category before and during enrollment:

	Number of Respondents		
Status	Before College	During College	Difference
Full-time Work	986	679	-307
Part-time Work	186	858	+672
Work-Study	NA	135	
Unemployed, Seeking Work	97	196	+99
Homemaker	232	208	-24
Military	102	43	-59
Unemployed, Not Seeking	57	254	+197
Other	104	89	-15

E. Financial Aid Support

Most respondents (65 percent) had no financial aid from loans, scholarships, state or federal aid programs, vocational rehabilitation, Bureau of Indian Affairs or Veteran's benefits. They may have received money for college from parents, or employers in addition to their own earnings.

Respondents at rural community colleges were more likely to say they received some form of financial aid with up to 53 percent indicating they received aid.

Status (Multiple responses)	Average %	Range
No Aid	65%	47% to 80%
State or Fed Financial Aid	25%	14% to 38%
Paying for Self (some also had aid or parents)	58%	
Parents Pay (some also had aid or self)	24%	15% to 37%
Employer	6%	
Loan	5%	
Scholarship	8%	
DVR, BIA, Veterans	8%	
DSHS (Public Assistance)	3%	

While 6 percent of respondents in state-funded courses had part of their costs covered by employers, additional students participated in contract-funded courses paid for by employers. In fall 1987, 12,595 students participated in contract courses.

F. Simultaneous Post-Secondary Enrollment

The survey asked respondents if they were enrolled at any other post-secondary institutions while they were enrolled at their community college. Only a small number were concurrently enrolled.

Status	Average %
No	96%
Yes, 2-year	1%
Yes, 4-year	2%

Students Unable to Get All Courses Wanted:

Respondents were asked if they were able to get all the courses they wanted. Those not able to get all their courses were asked the reasons for that situation. Results showed:

Able to Get All Courses?	Average %	Range
Yes	68%	57% to 76%
No	32%	24% to 43%
Reason, if No (Multiple Responses Possible)		
Courses Full Before I Enrolled	58%	26% to 55%
Courses Were at Wrong Time	41%	33% to 50%
Courses Not Offered	24%	15% to 38%
Courses Were Canceled	14%	5% to 26%
Did Not Have Time to Enroll For All Courses Wanted	6%	

Reason for Selecting This College:

The survey asked respondents to indicate what influenced them to select their particular college. Multiple responses were allowed. The answers listed most frequently related to the proximity of the college: courses at a convenient location (61 percent) and close to home or work (50 percent). Having the courses wanted by the respondents (49 percent) also had a high response. The next most frequent response was having costs within the respondent's ability to pay (45 percent).

What Influenced? (Multiple Responses Possible)	Average %	Range
Courses at a Convenient Location	61%	50% to 70%
Courses at a Convenient Time	34%	27% to 46%
Courses Offered Close to Home or Work	50%	34% to 62%
Offered Courses I Wanted	49%	
Cost Was Within My Ability To Pay	45%	33% to 59%
Reputation of Program	21%	
Friends Are Attending	12%	

APPENDIX B

SURVEY METHODS AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The Sample:

The objective of the selected sampling technique was to get a random sample of 10 percent of the students at the nine representative colleges: Grays Harbor (Aberdeen), Skagit Valley, Seattle Central, North Seattle, Bellevue, South Puget Sound, Clark (Vancouver), Wenatchee Valley and Yakima Valley. Such a sample would assure that results could be generalized to the total academic and vocational enrollment in state-supported courses at each of the nine colleges and to the community college system in general.

A cluster sampling method was used to select the students. A random sample was drawn of all state-supported courses (except ABE and ESL) offered during winter quarter. All students in the selected courses were sampled during class sometime during third, fourth or fifth week of winter quarter. No effort was made to secure responses from the students not attending on the day the survey was conducted. Although the exact number of students actually attending classes during the survey period is unknown, it is estimated that the sample was an average of 11 percent of the college's population of academic and vocational students.

College	Estimate of Sample as a % of Population
Grays Harbor	17%
Skagit Valley	6%
Seattle Central	12%
Seattle North	10%
Bellevue	10%
SPSCC	12%
Clark	10%
Wenatchee	15%
Yakima	18%
Average	11%

The courses selected broadly represented the offerings at each college, except at Clark College where the randomly selected courses were predominantly math and science courses. While the number of academic and vocational courses included in the sample represented the mix of the colleges, except Clark, the smaller size of vocational courses resulted in a slight under-representation of students in job preparatory classes. Caution is urged when drawing conclusions from the survey about the number of students who enroll to gain skills needed to get a job. A different sampling technique, proportional stratified sampling, is recommended for future studies of this type.

Full-time students were over-represented at all colleges, except Skagit Valley and Grays Harbor. The sample was 75 percent full-time, while the population was estimated to be only 50 percent full-time. For much of the analysis the sample was weighted (.4 for full-time status). The sampling error (at the .95 confidence interval) for sub-groups, however, was calculated on the unweighted sample. The calculations for full-time and part-time students were treated separately and the larger error was used.

The unweighted sample was representative of the student population of the community college system. Women comprised 57 percent of the respondents and are about 56 percent of the system enrollment. The under 25 age group comprised 48 percent of the respondents and about 45 percent of the system enrollment. Other age groups were about the same percentage as the system enrollment, with the exception of the sample being slightly smaller in the 55 and over age group than the system enrollment. Whites, other and non-reported race respordents were 81 percent of the total, compared to about 89 percent of the system enrollment.

Weighting the sample resulted in no substantial change in the demographic percentages. Although the exact sampling error for this weighted cluster sample was not calculated, it is conservatively assumed to be not larger than plus or minus 5 percent.

Race/Ethnic Data:

The race/ethnic group questions in the survey mirrored the 1980 Census pattern of asking if the person was of Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent first, then asking if they were Asian, Black, Native American, White or Other. The resulting count of Hispanics was almost double (7.6 percent) what might have been anticipated based on the enrollment data (3.6 percent).

The enrollment method of collecting race/ethnic information treats Hispanic as a race. Thus, in the enrollment data, a student who is both White and Hispanic must select one category or the other. In the survey, as in the U.S. Census, a person can select both the Hispanic and White categories. The survey results suggest that the enrollment-based race/ethnic information under-reports community college service to Hispanics.

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CURRENT STUDENT SURVEY - WINTER 1988

Bellevue Community College wants to better understand the reasons students enroll and the characteristics of the students we serve. Please help us by answering the survey below. Your responses will be kept confidential. You may attain a summary of the results from this survey at the Office of Instruction in April, 1988.

If you completed this survey in another course, do not complete the survey again. Thank you.

SECTION I: QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 8 ARE TO BE ANSWERED BY MARKING THE BEST RESPONSE.

Q1. Why are you currently enrolled at Bellevue Community College? Mark the letter that BEST applies to you.

A. GET A JOB
B. HELP ME WITH MY JOB
C. PREPARE FOR TRANSFER TO A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE
D. IMPROVE ENGLISH, READING AND MATH SKILLS
E. EARN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED
F. SEE IF I WILL DO WELL IN COLLEGE
G. LEARN A SPECIFIC COURSE OF STUDY
H. EXPLORE A CAREER DIRECTION
I. NOT SURE
J. OTHER

Q2. How does your enrollment at Bellevue Community College relate to your current job or future work plan? Mark the letter that BEST applies.

A. DOES NOT APPLY TO MY JOB OR FUTURE WORK PLANS
B. SKILLS TO GET A JOB
C. SKILLS TO ENHANCE CURRENT JOB
D. SKILLS TO GET A BETTER JOB
E. SKILLS TO KEEP UP-TO-DATE AT WORK
F. PLAN FOR CAREER CHANGE
G. BASIC SKILLS IN ENGLISH, READING AND MATH REQUIRED FOR JOB
H. OTHER

Q3. How many credits do you plan to complete at Bellevue Community College (include past credits and plans for next five years)? Mark the letter that BEST applies.

A. LESS THAN 5
B. 5 - 9
C. 10 - 19
D. 20 - 39
E. 40 - 59
F. 60 - 89
G. 90 OR MORE

-Continued On Next Page-

Q4. What is your current work status while attending college?
Mark the letter that BEST applies.

A. FULL TIME HOMEMAKER
B. WORK STUDY
C. EMPLOYED FULL TIME OR SELF-EMPLOYED (32 HOURS OR MORE PER WEEK)
D. EMPLOYED PART TIME OR SELF-EMPLOYED PART TIME
E. FULL TIME MILITARY
F. NOT EMPLOYED, BUT SEEKING EMPLOYMENT
G. NOT EMPLOYED AND NOT SEEKING EMPLOYMENT
H. OTHER

Q5. What were you doing with most of your time immediately before enrolling for the first time at Bellevue Community College?
Mark the letter that BEST applies.

A. ATTENDING ANOTHER COLLEGE
B. HOMEMAKER
C. ATTENDING HIGH SCHOOL
D. EMPLOYED FULL TIME OR SELF-EMPLOYED (32 HOURS OR MORE PER WEEK)
E. EMPLOYED PART TIME OR SELF-EMPLOYED PART TIME
F. IN MILITARY SERVICE
G. NOT EMPLOYED, BUT SEEKING EMPLOYMENT
H. NOT EMPLOYED AND NOT SEEKING EMPLOYMENT
I. OTHER

Q6. How much education had you already completed immediately before enrolling for the first time at Bellevue Community College? Include technical training in the military, apprenticeships, and trade schools in your response.
Mark the letter for the HIGHEST LEVEL COMPLETED.

A. LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL
B. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
C. SOME COLLEGE OR VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL TRAINING, BUT NO DEGREES OR CERTIFICATES
D. CERTIFICATE
E. ASSOCIATE DEGREE
F. BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR EQUIVALENT
G. MASTER'S DEGREE OR OTHER POST-BACHELOR'S WORK/DEGREE

Q7. How much education had you already completed before enrolling this quarter? Include technical training in the military, apprenticeships, and trade schools in your response.
Mark the letter for the HIGHEST LEVEL COMPLETED.

A. LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL
B. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
C. SOME COLLEGE OR VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL TRAINING, BUT NO DEGREES OR CERTIFICATES
D. CERTIFICATE
E. ASSOCIATE DEGREE
F. BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR EQUIVALENT
G. MASTER'S DEGREE OR OTHER POST-BACHELOR'S WORK/DEGREE

-Continued On Next Page-

Q8. Did you complete high school before first enrolling at Bellevue Community College?
Mark the letter that BEST applies.

A. YES, HIGH SCHOOL
B. YES, GED
C. YES, OTHER
D. NO

SECTION II: QUESTIONS 9 THROUGH 15 ARE TO BE ANSWERED BY MARKING ALL RESPONSES THAT APPLY

Q9. Do you plan to complete a degree or certificate in the next five years at Bellevue Community College?
MARK ALL the letters that apply.

A. GET A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED
B. GET A CERTIFICATE (DO NOT INCLUDE TEACHING CERTIFICATE)
C. GET AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE (TWO YEAR)
D. NO DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PLANNED AT BELLEVUE

Q10. Do you plan to complete a degree or certificate in the next five years at any other college or university?
MARK ALL the letters that apply.

A. GET A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR GED
B. GET A CERTIFICATE (DO NOT INCLUDE TEACHING CERTIFICATE)
C. GET AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE (TWO YEAR)
D. GET A BACHELOR'S DEGREE (FOUR YEAR)
E. GET OTHER DEGREES OR CERTIFICATES
F. NO DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PLANNED AT ANY COLLEGE

Q11. How are you financing your education?
MARK ALL the letters that apply.

A. PAYING FOR MYSELF
B. RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID FROM THE COLLEGE (STATE OR FEDERAL AID)
C. EMPLOYER PAYS FOR TUITION
D. HAVE A PRIVATE LOAN FOR COLLEGE
E. HAVE A SCHOLARSHIP FOR COLLEGE
F. PARENTS PAY FOR COLLEGE
G. HAVE OTHER STATE OR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE, SUCH AS DVR, VETERAN'S BENEFITS OR BIA
H. DSHS PUBLIC ASSISTANCE GRANT
I. OTHER

Q12. How did you learn about Bellevue Community College?
MARK ALL the letters that apply.

A. COURSE SCHEDULE MAILED TO HOME
B. ADVERTISEMENT (NEWSPAPER, RADIO, BILLBOARDS)
C. RELATIVES OR FRIENDS
D. HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS OR TEACHERS
E. COMMUNITY FAIRS OR DISPLAYS
F. PRESENTATION BY STAFF
G. STAFF AT ANOTHER COLLEGE
H. OTHER

-Continued on Next Page-

Q13. What influenced you to attend Bellevue Community College?
MARK ALL the letters that apply.

A. COURSES AT A CONVENIENT LOCATION
B. COURSES AT A CONVENIENT TIME
C. COURSES OFFERED CLOSE TO HOME OR WORK
D. OFFERED COURSES I WANTED
E. COST WAS WITHIN MY ABILITY TO PAY
F. REPUTATION OF PROGRAMS
G. FRIENDS ARE ATTENDING
H. OTHER

Q14. Were you able to get all the classes you wanted this quarter?

A. YES
B. NO

IF "NO," ANSWER QUESTION 15. IF "YES," SKIP TO QUESTION 16.

Q15. Why were you unable to get the courses you wanted?
MARK ALL the letters that apply.

A. THE COURSES I WANTED WERE CANCELLED
B. THE COURSES I WANTED WERE NOT OFFERED
C. THE COURSES I WANTED WERE AT THE WRONG TIME
D. THE COURSES I WANTED WERE FULL BEFORE I ENROLLED
E. I DID NOT HAVE TIME TO ENROLL IN ALL THE COURSES I WANTED
F. OTHER

SECTION III: **DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION-- MARK LETTER THAT <u>BEST</u> APPLIES FOR QUESTIONS 16 THROUGH 22.**
MARK <u>ALL</u> THE LETTERS THAT APPLY FOR QUESTION 23.

Q16. Are you of Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent?

A. NO
B. YES, MEXICAN, MEXICAN-AMERICAN, CHICANO
C. YES, PUERTO RICAN
D. YES, CUBAN
E. YES, OTHER SPANISH/HISPANIC

Q17. Are you?

A. ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
B. BLACK
C. NATIVE AMERICAN
D. WHITE
E. OTHER

-Continued On Next Page-

Q18. Age group:

A. UNDER 20
B. 20-22
C. 23-24
D. 25-29
E. 30-34
F. 35-39
G. 40-44
H. 45-49
I. 50-54
J. 55 OR OVER

Q19. Credits enrolled at this college this quarter:

A. 1 OR LESS
B. 2 OR 3
C. 4 TO 6
D. 7 TO 9
E. 10 TO 11
F. 12 TO 17
G. 18 OR MORE

Q20. Are you currently enrolled at any other college?

A. NO
B. YES, ANOTHER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
C. YES, A PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE
D. YES, A PRIVATE FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE
E. YES, TECHNICAL SCHOOL OR BUSINESS COLLEGE
F. YES, OTHER

Q21. What is your average family income for a year?

A. $4,999 PER YEAR OR LESS
B. $5,000 TO $9,999
C. $10,000 TO $14,999
D. $15,000 TO $19,999
E. $20,000 to $29,999
F. $30,000 or over

Q22. What is your family size (the family reported above)?

A. JUST MYSELF
B. 2
C. 3
D. 4
E. 5
F. 6
G. 7
H 8 OR MORE

-Continued On Next Page-

Q23. Do any of the following statements about family status apply to you? **MARK ALL the letters that apply.**

A. SINGLE PARENT WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN
B. COUPLE WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN
C. COUPLE WITH NO DEPENDENT CHILDREN
D. LIVING WITH PARENTS
E. LIVING ALONE
F. OTHER

Thank you for your assistance.

LS:1/12/88
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